1653

MEMORIAL

ON BEHALF OF THE

KING OF TANJORE,

PRESENTED TO

LORD NORTH.

BRITISH MUSEUM

MEMORIAL

OF THE

KING OF TANJORE.

THE King of Tanjore has ſo long and ſo heavily ſuffered from miſrepreſentations of all ſorts, that he has thought it abſolutely neceſſary to take effectual means for opening a direct communication with Great Britain. He wiſhes to lay his rights, his ſufferings, and the whole ſtate of his affairs, with an humble confidence, and without any reſerve, before his Majeſty. As his Majeſty's virtues have ever been the higheſt object of his veneration, it is natural that his Majeſty's favour ſhould be the firſt object of his ambition.

1. Rights of the King of Tanjore.

The territory of Tanjore is an ancient kingdom, and the King of Tanjore is an hereditary prince. This he is bound to claim in favour of his nation, his caſt, his family, and himſelf. But he claims nothing more. As no

evidence has been ſet up to invalidate that claim; ſo it is not injurious to the peace, proſperity, or juſt rights of any neighbour. Neither he nor his predeceſſors have ever been reckoned among thoſe ambitious adventurers, who have diſtracted and waſted the peninſula of India ever ſince the decline of the Mogul empire.

2. King of Tanjore's voluntary ſubmiſſion to the crown of Great Britain.

If the Mogul empire, (which is no longer able to coerce its ſervants, or to protect its dependents) ſhould be conſidered as ſtill ſubſiſting, to the Grand Mogul, and to the Grand Mogul alone, he ſtill owes obedience. He is to receive orders from and make appeals to the throne of Delhi. To that throne his tribute is due, and he is willing to pay it; receiving from thence the protection of his territories, which that acknowledgment of ſuperiority demands, and in conſideration of which the tribute is paid. But if that empire be diſſolved, the King of Tanjore is free to chooſe a protector; and his choice is made. His anceſtors, by the events of war, became dependent on the Grand Mogul; he is diſpoſed, voluntarily and by choice, to become ſubject to his Majeſty, and to hold his territories as dependent on the crown of Great Britain.

3. Voluntary offer of contribution.

In this character he is willing, according to his ability, to contribute, in whatever manner it ſhall be agreed on, to the ſupport of the ſtrength and ſtability of the Britiſh power in India. He has already conſented to a large annual

nual payment to the Company, for the maintenance of troops; and he truſts that he will not be found a leſs dutiful and affectionate dependent than his father had ſhewn himſelf, in the moſt trying times, an uſeful and faithful ally.

If he were not willing alſo to comport himſelf with the moſt exact and ſcrupulous juſtice towards all the world, he would not conſider himſelf as a proper object of his Majeſty's protection. He claims nothing derogatory to the rights or intereſts of thoſe, who may already be honoured with any part of the grace which he ſolicits. An Hindoo as he is of the Bramin perſuaſion, diſpoſition, and manners, his views are ſolely confined to peace and quiet: he claims only to remain as he has always been; to poſſeſs his natural country, to ſubſiſt his people, to pay his debts, and to fulfil his engagements.

4. Submits to his Majeſty's orders all diſputes with the Nabob of Arcot.

It is with the greateſt concern to himſelf, that he is obliged to keep up any diſcuſſion with his neighbour the Nabob of Arcot; he has the greateſt reſpect for that high officer; and he wiſhes to be, as he always has been, ſerviceable to his true intereſts. He will give an unequivocal proof of the ſincerity of his intentions: The moment that his Majeſty ſhall be pleaſed to decide what he ought to do with regard to the Nabob, his Majeſty's orders will

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be the ſole meaſure of the Nabob's rights, and the King of Tanjore's obedience.

5. Deſires ſome conſideration of his circumſtances in the demands made upon him, and prays that accounts may be ſtated.

Until that determination ſhall be made, which it is again aſſured will be received with the moſt perfect and dutiful ſubmiſſion, the King of Tanjore has, and can have, but one rule for his direction. He muſt conſider the treaty of 1762 as the baſis of all fair tranſactions between him and the Nabob. He is ſatisfied to abide by that treaty: he is ſatisfied to pay both what is there ſtipulated as a tribute to the Grand Mogul, and that which has been there agreed to, as a durbar preſent, and gratuity to the Nabob himſelf, and which, for its kind, is generous to exceſs. But it is unneceſſary to point out to his Majeſty's wiſdom, and to the diſcernment of his miniſters, that there is a connection between payment and ability: it will not be permitted to deſpoil a debtor, and then to turn the effects of his poverty into an offence. The Nabob cannot be permitted to ſequeſter into his own hands the whole of the King of Tanjore's ſubſtance, to the amount of ſeveral millions ſterling, and then to call upon him for a rigorous and punctual payment of what the treaty allows him, without any ſet-off or allowance for what he had taken. When the Nabob, and thoſe gentlemen at Madraſs who have acted in partnerſhip with him,

ſhall have fairly accounted for the immenſe ſums of money, and for the moſt valuable effects, which had been accumulated at Tanjore, by the ſucceſſive care, and for the ſupport of the dignity of a long race of opulent kings, and which were ſeized with ſo many circumſtances of unuſual and unmanly rigour, even to the tearing their ornaments from reſpectable matrons and women of high condition—then the King of Tanjore, forgetting his misfortunes in the reparation that is made him and in the ability he acquires, will moſt punctually diſcharge all demands upon him, even to thoſe who are his implacable enemies. Whenever his Majeſty ſhall order the account of theſe almoſt incredible ſums, of which a faithful and ſubmiſſive ally of Great Britain has been deſpoiled, to be laid before him; of the demands that in a rapid ſucceſſion have been multiplied upon the King of Tanjore, not from his ability to pay, but his inability to reſiſt; of the inſults and indignities which have accompanied and aggravated thoſe oppreſſions; of the enormous uſury reſulting from new extortions growing out of a compliance with the old, and creating freſh uſurious borrowings to pay the intereſt of every former borrowing; of the premeditated ruin of his credit by thoſe who compelled him to ſtrain it, to gratify their rapacity.

All theſe, if required, ſhall be laid before adminiſtration in ſo clear and well-authenticated detail, 6. Ready to lay the authenticated detail of his

ſufferings before adminiſtration.

as cannot fail forcibly to affect his Majeſty's humanity. If theſe injuries are conſidered as too great for a perfect reparation, it is to be hoped that ſome regard will be had to them now that both parties have an opportunity of being heard. The King of Tanjore is confident that no demands will be enforced by power upon one of the parties who have mutual charges and open accounts, without a fair ſtatement and liquidation of what is ſet forth and charged by the other.

7. Prays to be freed from extraordinary exactions, and from compulſory advances.

The King of Tanjore humbly repreſents, that the arrangement of garriſoning his places with Engliſh troops, and his agreement to pay four lacks of pagodas a year for their maintenance, was the mere effect of his ſenſibility to the juſtice and generoſity of the Engliſh, for taking him out of the hands of his enemy, and reſtoring him to his kingdom. But the payment of that ſum was adapted to the ſeaſon of the year when his country was able to furniſh revenues. He has lately, without regard to ſuch ability, been obliged to make an advance of one of the inſtallments. It was very inconvenient to him to do ſo; but he ſubmitted for the ſake of peace, and to ſhew his readineſs to comply with every thing that was in his power, to oblige the Governor and Council; but gaining confidence from obtaining their requeſt of the advance of one inſtallment, they have proceeded to exact the payment of four whole lacks of pagodas more

under the term of a depoſit. This vaſt ſum, amounting to one hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds ſterling, beſides charges, is exacted from him without the leaſt pretence of claim, in the midſt of the moſt complicated and unexampled diſtreſſes—not a year after his reſtoration to the walls of a naked houſe, and to the government of an harraſſed, pillaged, and impoveriſhed kingdom, and loaded with debts and demands of every kind that can be named or conceived. Thus circumſtanced, at once injured and inſulted, the King of Tanjore truſts, that this vaſt ſum of one hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds be, according to ſtipulation, either repaid to him immediately, or faithfully carried to his account in the future maintenance of the troops, which, under the command of the Engliſh, are ſtipulated to be kept up by them in his country.

8. That all demands on him be reduced to certainty.

To this hour the King of Tanjore is utterly ignorant of the nature, extent, and foundation of thoſe further claims of the Nabob, which have been the ſource of his paſt calamities and his preſent apprehenſions. After much negotiation, and two grievous wars, they have never yet been diſtinctly ſtated to him; and he has only known them by his ſufferings. In the Company's papers, printed in the courſe of this controverſy, it appears, that the Nabob is himſelf at a loſs to explain what it is he chooſes

to demand; for being applied to by the governor and council of Madraſs on that ſubject, he ſtates his claim in this extraordinary manner, "That it always depends "on *the force of arms*; that the Governors received of the "former Tanjore Kings large ſums by *force*; that he hopes "to obtain larger, having by the favour of the Engliſh, "and the aſſiſtance of their troops, more power than any "one before him ever had."

9. Appeals from indefinite claims.

This extraordinary claim, the King of Tanjore humbly conceives and ſubmits to his Majeſty's juſtice, can never be the deſcription of the right of any perſon in or upon the poſſeſſion of another. Firſt, becauſe it leaves the poſſeſſor nothing he can call his own; and next becauſe the claim is not bottomed on any of the three only foundations of all legal claims, Preſcription, Grant, or Convention, but refers for its meaſure ſolely to the degree of *force* which may be employed; which ſo far from being the ground of a right, is the very deſcription of a wrong.

He admits indeed that great ſums at various times have been extorted by violence from the Kings of Tanjore, by the predeceſſors in office of the Nabob, and indeed by ſeveral other neighbours; whenever ſurprize, or ſiniſter accidents have not left the kingdom of Tanjore in a condition to defend itſelf againſt them. But the King of Tanjore hopes that acts of violence create no precedent in favour

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of thoſe who commit them: If ſuch acts have ſuch virtue, other perſons unfortunately are able to entitle themſelves on the ſame principle as the Nabob relies on; his claim will be far from excluſive, and his ſhare of the advantage very inadequate to the extent of the demand.

From this extraordinary and indefinite claim it is the King of Tanjore appeals to his Majeſty's juſtice, humbly praying that the Nabob may be limited to the terms of the treaty; and that he (the King of Tanjore) may make his payments through the Company; and thus remove all ſubject of diſpute with that great officer. The King of Tanjore wiſhes for nothing but to know on what ground he is to ſtand, and (in conformity to his Majeſty's pleaſure) to obtain ſome certain rule for his future direction.

If the King of Tanjore were left free to defend himſelf by his own arrangements, and the forces of his own country, with the chearful ſupport of a people affectionate to their native government, (under which they were an object of ſo much envy to all the neighbouring ſtates) and full of zeal to the benevolent religion by which they are cheriſhed—weakened and impoveriſhed as he is, he has nothing to fear from the Nabob of Arcot. It is in the aſſiſtance which the Nabob derives from the Engliſh, that he avowedly truſts for the means of eſtabliſhing

ſuch claims on the King of Tanjore, as for the firſt time ſince the beginning of the world, have in cold blood been ſtated on paper. That aſſiſtance withdrawn from thoſe claims, the King of Tanjore has no more to dread from the Nabob's power of enforcing them, than from the ſtrength of his arguments in proving them. In this ſituation it is moſt humbly hoped, that the Britiſh policy will not ſuffer the Britiſh power to be uſed for the ruin of a prince and people, whoſe ſole weakneſs conſiſts in their voluntary dependence on this nation; and that his ruin will not be accompliſhed in favour of a perſon who has, by a variety of public acts and declarations, thought proper loudly to diſclaim all ſort of dependence upon that very power to which at the ſame time he altogether truſts for the accompliſhment of his deſigns.

10. Native princes deſirous to depend on Great Britain, and not be ſacrificed to Mahometans.

The King of Tanjore, intereſted in the continuance of the Britiſh power in India, does not doubt what he moſt ſincerely wiſhes, that the friendſhip of the Nabob will always continue inviolable to thoſe to whom he is bound by ſo many ties of gratitude; and that the wealth and power wholly acquired by Engliſh aſſiſtance, may never be employed in any other ſervice: But, as it cannot be amiſs, whilſt human frailty continues, to take all ſecurities for political friendſhip that are compatible with ho-

nour and juſtice, it may not, perhaps, be altogether adviſeable ſo to confide in one friend, as to exclude all other connection and ſupport.

It is from an apprehenſion in the King of Tanjore that he has been miſrepreſented to his Majeſty, and not from any thing like pride or preſumptuous value ſet upon any ſervice of his, that he begs leave to ſubmit to his Majeſty's conſideration, that if the Nabob of Arcot is the ally of Great Britain, the King of Tanjore is her ally alſo. If the Nabob has adhered to the Intereſt of Great Britain in her early ſtruggles in India, it is clear, that he rather received aſſiſtance than gave it; and fought leſs for her power than for his own exiſtence: But it was otherwiſe with the King of Tanjore. The father of the preſent King, then in actual and undiſturbed poſſeſſion of great hereditary wealth and power, chearfully employed a large part, and riſqued the whole for Great Britain. If the Nabob of Arcot be an uſeful ally to Great Britain, it is to Tanjore that Great Britain owes even the Nabob; who could not have ſubſiſted (as he himſelf formally acknowledged in the year 1755) without the aſſiſtance which he received from Tanjore in the hour of his greateſt perils and diſtreſs. If the Nabob has done eminent ſervices, he has received ample rewards. He is made great in

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wealth, power, and dominion, infinitely beyond what his father's ambition ever dreamed of. He has been enabled to make a great variety of conqueſt, and is at this inſtant in the act of completing the ſubjugation of ſeveral Princes, Killedars, and Pollegars, who had ever remained independent of him. The King of Tanjore has received no rewards whatever; and he deſires no other than, in conſideration of his important ſervices and faithful attachment, that his crown, his revenues, his country, his people, and his religion, may not be added to the rewards of the Nabob; that one ally may not be made a prey to another; that the kingdom of Tanjore, inhabited by mild, induſtrious, conſcientious, and peaceable people, may not be made a ſacrifice to the revival and aggrandizement of the Mahometan intereſt in India, and to the augmentation of the power of that ferocious and exterminatory ſyſtem. It is not to dictate to the wiſdom of his Majeſty's councils, but to appeal and ſubmit to that wiſdom, that the King of Tanjore begs leave to ſuggeſt that his Majeſty's intereſt lies, in what his gracious diſpoſition leads him to, in procuring a balance of equality, juſtice, and concord among the Company's allies, neighbours, or dependents, or in whatever other light, or by whatever other name, they are diſtinguiſhed. The extraordinary and indefinite claims of the Nabob put an end at once to all this balance and equality, and annihilate

nihilate his Majeſty's power of preſerving equity and juſtice, and of protecting thoſe who are reſolved to have no other protector.

11. That the Nabob may not be permitted to divert the water from Tanjore, and ſo create a famine at his pleaſure.

From the nature of the ſame boundleſs and indefinite claim in the Nabob, ariſes the greateſt of the grievances which the King of Tanjore ſuffers. As ſoon as it is laid open, there is no doubt but that grievance will be thought entitled to immediate redreſs. It applies to his Majeſty's benevolence and goodneſs of heart, as well as to his juſtice, in a point the moſt intereſting to the general cauſe of humanity. The King of Tanjore is perſonally much leſs affected by it, than a vaſt body of ſuffering and innocent people. It is neceſſary to ſtate this affecting matter with perſpicuity; and it ſhall be done with all poſſible conciſeneſs.

The kingdom of Tanjore is the moſt fertile ſpot in Hindoſtan, perhaps in the world, until very lately the beſt cultivated, and for its extent the moſt populous. It owes its fertility to the uſe that is made of the great river Cavery, which branching out into a great number of channels, waters and fructifies the whole country. The chief, almoſt the whole ſubſiſtance of the people of India, conſiſts in rice. It is well known that this grain, for a part of the time of its growth, muſt be kept conſtantly

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flooded. In that country therefore, the culture of the earth, and the ſubſequent ſubſiſtance of the people, depends on a proper ſupply of water; and this again depends upon maintaining the banks of the rivers in a proper condition. The Kings of Tanjore (the native ſovereigns) have always attended to the maintenance and repair of thoſe banks, as the principal object of their domeſtic policy, and the leading duty of their office. By this means the country of Tanjore was enabled to afford not only a plentiful ſupply to its own numerous inhabitants, but was, and in a good meaſure ſtill is, the principal granary of all the extenſive coaſt of Coromandel; every part of which is ſenſibly affected by whatever promotes or obſtructs the culture of that country.

The Nabob of Arcot, who immediately borders on Tanjore, during the late troubles (and for ſome time before) has thought fit forcibly to put a ſtop to the neceſſary repairs of the banks of the principal branch of the river Cavery. He will not ſuffer the King of Tanjore to keep up the banks of this river at his own expence. If this main river, from whence ſeveral others ſubdivide themſelves, ſhould, for want of ſuch repairs, be diverted from its preſent courſe, the whole of the fertile and delightful country of Tanjore would be turned into a frightful deſert.

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The King of Tanjore, on behalf of this people, throws himſelf upon the mercy of a Prince who is the father of his own. He appeals to his goodneſs and juſtice againſt a ſpecies of hoſtility without example; and which, without drawing the ſword, will waſte and deſolate the country far worſe than any irruption of the moſt fierce and barbarous invaders. If his Majeſty ſhould receive the humble offer of the allegiance of the King of Tanjore, this diſtant people will alſo become his; but if his Majeſty ſhould decide that the empire of Hindoſtan ſtill exiſts, and that the Mogul is ſtill to be obeyed; or if, unfortunately, reaſons of ſtate ſhould prevent his Majeſty from taking more immediately upon himſelf the ſuperiority (which on the above condition and ſuppoſition is offered) the King of Tanjore hopes, that his Majeſty's benign diſpoſition and magnanimity will not ſuffer him to give countenance to an act of ſuch extreme hardſhip, and which affects the property and ſubſiſtance of infinite multitudes of people. To whomſoever this country ſhall belong, it is proper it ſhould be cultivated.

The King of Tanjore ſets up no new or doubtful claim. Let the river flow in its *ancient* channel, let the banks have their ancient reparation, and let him that enjoys the benefit undergo the charge. Indeed the Governor and

Council of Madraſs have lately promiſed to put a ſtop to the preſent outrages committed on thoſe banks: but that is rather a ceſſation of the injury, than a direliction of the ruinous claim; and it is hoped that preciſe and definite orders will be given on that head.

This is the firſt object of the King of Tanjore's moſt humble, and, he truſts, moſt unexceptionable ſolicitation. The ſecond, which he ventures to lay with the ſame humility at his Majeſty's feet, he is confident comes equally recommended, by its clear and uncontrovertible reaſon, to his Majeſty's juſtice, as well as by the hardſhip of the caſe, to his royal clemency. It is proper to explain the nature and ſource of it.

12. Pretended demands of debt and aſſignments on the Tanjore country.

When the Nabob found it was decided that he muſt reſtore the kingdom of Tanjore to its owner, he took meaſures to make the reſtitution of as little benefit to the King or people as poſſible; and at once to *gratify* the enmity, which, through the ill offices of deſigning people, he has unhappily imbibed againſt this moſt unfortunate Prince, by laying a foundation of his endleſs diſtreſs, and at the ſame time to enſure friends among the ruling people at the preſidency of Madraſs, by intereſting them in his deſtruction, he gave aſſignments to Mr. Benfield, and other Engliſh gentlemen, to a vaſt amount, on the revenue of

the Tanjore country, which he was ſenſible he muſt ſpeedily be called upon to relinquiſh.

The ground upon which they affect to juſtify this act, is a ſuppoſed right, claimed by the Nabob, to the growing crop, in return for the funds which he aſſerts he ſupplied the farmers with for ſowing it.

On this extraordinary, and to him ruinous claim, the King of Tanjore begs leave to ſubmit a few plain obſervations. Firſt, That admitting the fact of the advance to be as it is ſtated, the mere advance of the money for ſowing the crop, can in equity entitle him to nothing more than the re-payment of the principle money expended, together with the lawful intereſt, and not to the whole produce; to which, as a temporary poſſeſſor, he cannot entitle himſelf or his aſſignees on any principle whatever.

Secondly, If any equitable claim could be founded on the ſowing the land for a crop, it is not to be forgot that the Nabob himſelf received the territory of Tanjore with a crop ſown; and that crop, ſown at the King of Tanjore's expence (the whole benefit of which had been received by the Nabob) will be a full compenſation for the ſeed ſown by the Nabob, of which the King of Tanjore is to have the benefit. Even admitting the Nabob's temporary poſſeſſion to have

been lawful, after his enjoyment of the current produce, he ought to reſtore the country in the condition in which he found it; that is, with a crop ready ſown.

Thirdly, If he did advance the money for ſowing the crop, it was not from any funds of his own, but from the revenues of the kingdom of Tanjore itſelf. It will hardly be admitted before any equitable tribunal, that a man ſhould ſeize upon the profits of an eſtate, and then charge the common neceſſary out-goings, ſupplied from the very profits, as a new debt upon that eſtate.

If the gentlemen lately acting as the honourable Eaſt India Company's ſervants at Madraſs, ſhould ſucceed in compelling him to pay ſuch demands, they would, by this contrivance of theirs, keep the King of Tanjore for a year, after his apparent reſtoration, diſpoſſeſſed of his territorial revenue, whilſt they leave him charged with the expence of all the eſtabliſhments, military, civil, and religious: in other words, they would ruin him. He truſts, as no ſort of ground appears for this ruinous demand, that what is not enforced by equity and juſtice, will not be forced upon him by the authority or power of Great Britain.

13. Detention of his records.

In purſuance of the ſame plan of ruining the King of Tanjore, notwithſtanding his reſtoration to his dominions,

all his records, as well thoſe which regard his revenues, as thoſe which relate to his rights and titles of all kinds, to his treaties, his obligations, and his alliances, and thoſe on which the property of his ſubjects depends, are all forcibly withheld from him: His Majeſty and his miniſters will be ſenſible of the damage of every kind which muſt accrue to any country, from carrying off the whole of its public records; nothing can be properly defended or claimed, and all ſorts of falſe claims may be ſet up. As the territory is reſtored, its titles and evidences ought in reaſon to attend the eſtate, and the public records ought to go with the public government.

14. Detention of his territories.

Another remaining matter of grievance which affects the King of Tanjore, ſelected out of many, as among the moſt urgent, is a violation of the treaty of 1762. It is not from that treaty he derives his right under which he was confeſſedly in poſſeſſion at that time; he offers it, to ſave trouble, as a formal recognition of thoſe rights by all the parties, and as an arrangement guarranteed by the authority acting for Great Britain in the Eaſt Indies. When, by that treaty, the Nabob of Arcot was left in poſſeſſion of the fort of Arnie, the territory or land belonging to that diſtrict of Arnie, together with another Jaghire territory, called Annimuntagoody, were to be confirmed

firmed to the King of Tanjore; theſe, the Nabob ſince the laſt intruſion, contrary to the treaty, withheld from the King of Tanjore: who prays they may be reſtored to him, agreeably to his ancient rights, and the clear tenor of that treaty, as well as the expreſs orders of the Company.

The whole is humbly laid at his Majeſty's feet, to be regulated according to his wiſdom and juſtice. The King of Tanjore in ſtating his rights, and praying for redreſs, does not preſume to interfere in the policy of this kingdom with regard to the regulation of its affairs in India. Whatever his Majeſty's wiſdom, and that of the public councils of the nation ſhall determine on theſe great points, will meet with his moſt chearful acquieſcence. He has hitherto venerated in the honourable Eaſt India Company, the repreſentation of his Majeſty's authority, and that of the Britiſh nation; and he will reſpect it in whatever ſhape it ſhall appear. Whatever treatment he may have met with from ſome of its ſervants, and at ſome periods, the treatment from the Company itſelf, through which alone he has had a regular and formal intercourſe with the Britiſh nation, has given him no cauſe of complaint. If he had ſeen nothing but injuſtice and violence in the ſole repreſentation of the Britiſh power in India, his

his attachment to his Majeſty and the Engliſh intereſt, could not have been ſo natural, nor of courſe ſo forcible as it is. All his misfortunes he attributes to miſrepreſentations, hard to be cleared up on account of the great diſtance between the two countries. Diſtance inevitably makes that redreſs of his grievances as ſlow, as, in the end he indulges himſelf in the hopes from his Majeſty's goodneſs, that it will be both certain and compleat.

FINIS.